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The Lancaster Intelligencer.

LANCASTER, JULY 15, 1885.

Reorganize the Civil Service Commission.

Among the great number of people who are making a can out of the civil service reform idea the three members of the commission must be written down as the most persistent. They are continually making themselves ridiculous by deciding one way in one case and another way in a similar one by pushing themselves in where they do not belong and by continual patent interviews with themselves from which the greatness of the commission is never omitted.

The men were originally selected without any special reference to their fitness for the work in hand. Dorman B. Eaton was a narrow, conceited and bumptious old man who had used the scissors and paté to produce a history of the civil service of Great Britain. In doing this he became thoroughly impressed with the idea that the English system was not only the best, but the only one on the planet. He entirely forgot or overlooked the fact that it could not be engratified successfully upon a government like the United States. But he has gone on in the most persistent and ridiculous way until the real friends of an honest reform of abuses have been compelled to write him down an ass. The quicker he is turned out the better it will be for the cause.

Of his associates, John M. Gregory, of Illinois, was a professor in a prairie college out in Illinois. He belonged to that traditional type of the school-master who looks upon book knowledge as the end and aim of all things human. He had no fitness, special or otherwise, for a place of such importance when the successful inauguration of a new and difficult system, which the public did not then and does not now understand, was to be made.

But the worst selection of all was Leroy D. Thomas, of Ohio, the Democratic member of the committee. He was apparently chosen on the principle that, as the minority must be recognized under the law, it was the proper thing to pick out the weakest and most inconsequential Democrat to be found anywhere. A little probate judge out in a backwoods town in Ohio was thus put into a position of great delicacy, as the representative of one-half the voters of the country. The result is that he has been making a fool of himself in season and out of season ever since.

There is a general desire to promote the cause of real civil service reform; but this public demand can not be satisfied unless the work is entrusted to men whose character and fitness are known and recognized. This is not the case with the incumbents, and the sooner the entire commission is reorganized the better it will be for the cause, for the president and for all concerned or interested. It is certainly not necessary to put such a work into the hands of three of the weakest and most inefficient men to be found in the country.

Moreover, these men were the appointees of an administration with entirely different aims and purposes from those of the present administration. It needs different agents to give vitality and vigor to its practical ideas of reform, and to command for them the respect and support of its own party, while it wins and holds the respect of the people of the country.

Turn the commissioners out, and appoint better men in their places.

A Poor Opinion of the Law.

Bill Chandler is of opinion that Attorney General Garland is ill acquainted with the law, and is even devoid of it.

William declares that any man can see that Mr. Roach had nothing to do with the law of Congress authorizing the building of the Dolphin, when he was required to build her according to the plans of the secretary of the navy. Mr. Chandler is profoundly convinced that these two authorities offer Mr. Roach a perfect shield against the fact that the Dolphin is not the sort of boat that Congress ordered to be built.

The difference between Attorney General Garland and the ex-secretary of the navy, whose board planned the Dolphin, is simply as to whether the government can be compelled to pay for a fourteen-knot ship when Congress only authorized a fifteen-knot ship to be built.

The attorney general says that as there was no authority given to build anything less than a fifteen-knot vessel, nothing less can be paid for.

Mr. Chandler says that is nonsense; that the naval advisory board did not design a fifteen-knot boat.

It is hard upon Roach that he suffers for the sins of the shiparchitects, if he had nothing to do with the plan. But it is to be remembered that many good men get into very bad holes by not mind what they are about. If it is good law, as the attorney general declares, that we are not liable to pay for a vessel that does not come up to the standard required by the law which authorized its construction, then Mr. Roach needed to keep his eye on the law and understand that he must meet its requirements and that he could not build a boat on anybody's order that would fail to do it.

Mr. Roach erred in not watching the plan of the naval advisory board and requiring them to be made so as to meet the law of Congress. Mr. Roach doubtless profited by the laxness of the naval advisory board's plans. Mr. Roach put, in his bids, perhaps with a knowledge

that he would not be held up to the law of Congress. Mr. Roach was safe as long as Bill Chandler was secretary, too. Wilmot's decided opinion was that he and his board would be a bulwark for Roach, behind which he could build the Dolphin about as he pleased. It was bad luck for Roach when Chandler went out and a new interpretation of contractor's obligations became fashionable in the navy department. If Roach had known what was coming he would not have contracted to build the Dolphin as cheap as he did perhaps; and he would certainly have hurried her to completion while Mr. Chandler reigned. Mr. Roach was too stupid and slow.

He was enough napping. It is the fortune of war. After his many and profitless campaigns against the treasury, it was about time for his luck to go wrong. Such games cannot be played forever. Something will drop in sometimes to spoil them however nicely the cards may seem to be stacked. Mr. Roach has come to grief, but he ought to be able to retire to a comfortably lined nest for his wounded body.

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